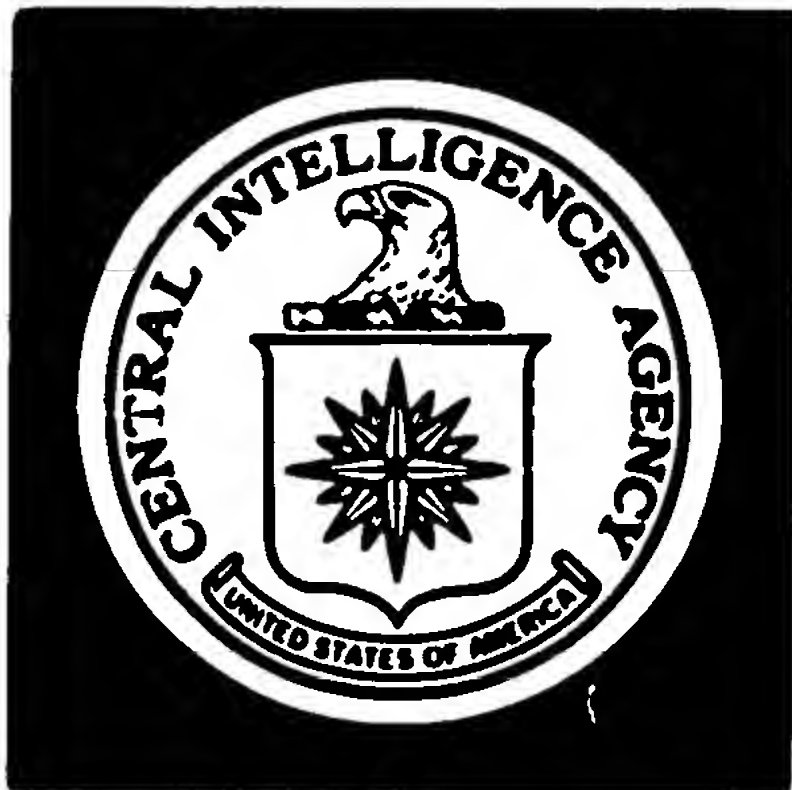


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**DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE**

Intelligence Report

LIN PIAO AND THE GREAT HELSMAN

(Reference Title: POLO XXXIX)

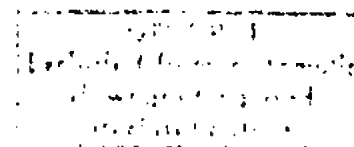
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LIN PIAO AND THE GREAT HELMSMAN**MEMORANDUM TO RECIPIENTS:**

Lin Piao, now 62 years of age, has long been Mao Tse-tung's favorite military leader. It was not until 1958, however, that he became a major party leader, and he has been Mao's "closest comrade-in-arms" and designated successor as chairman of the party only since 1966. Lin's unexpected rise to such eminence has evoked questions as to whether he should be taken seriously as a successor to Mao and as a true Maoist.

For example, has Lin merely exploited Mao's vanity and the opportunities provided by the Cultural Revolution for his own purposes, or is he fully faithful to Mao and committed to Maoism? Was Mao's choice of Lin as successor a sudden and arbitrary decision which he may reverse, or was the act a culmination of years of growing confidence in Lin as a standard bearer for Maoist revolution?

This Intelligence Report gives the reader a sense of Lin's development and character and of his relationship over the years with Mao. It concludes that Lin is a devoted Maoist, that he will probably take the helm from the Great Helmsman, and that he will attempt to follow the revolutionary course that has been charted by Mao.

The larger question as to whether Lin Piao as The Chairman will be able to stay in power without modifying Mao's policies is the subject of future papers in a series of SRS studies of Lin Piao.

This study was reviewed by the Office of National Estimates and the Office of Current Intelligence. Both are in general agreement with its thrust and findings.

Chief, DD/I Special Research Staff

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LIN PIAO AND THE GREAT HELMSMAN

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LIN PIAO AND THE GREAT HELMSMAN**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS****Lin's Support of Mao**

The detailed record set forth at Annex is one of Lin Piao's dog-like devotion to Mao over a period of at least 35 years. While the story of Lin's relations with Mao in the early years of 1928-1934 has been supplied only recently and may be in part fabricated, the record is solid from 1935 to date. It shows Lin standing with Mao against three powerful forces: Mao's rivals for leadership of the party, Lin's peers in the PLA, and a succession of Soviet leaders.

Lin has given Mao important and sometimes crucial support against his rivals in the party many times: in the January 1935 showdown which made Mao dominant in the party, in the 1942 "rectification" campaign, in the challenge by Peng Te-huai in 1959, during the first stage of the challenge by Liu Shao-chi in 1962, throughout the prolonged struggle for power with Liu's party apparatus in the years 1962-65, in the autumn of 1965 as the Cultural Revolution was emerging, in Mao's operations outside Peking in the winter of 1965-66, and throughout the tumultuous events of spring and summer 1966 that ended with the purge of Liu and the smashing of the party apparatus. At each of these junctures, Lin risked his own position; he identified himself so completely with Mao that he would have been brought down if Mao had lost the battle.

Similarly, Lin has supported Mao against one or another group in the Chinese Communist armed forces much of the time since at least 1935; and in the Cultural

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Revolution he has put heavy pressure on the PLA as a whole, thereby risking his own base of power. Lin supported Mao against military as well as party leaders in the showdown of January 1935, helped to purge the PLA in the "rectification" of 1942, carried out the purge of 1959, and took the lead in purging the chief-of-staff and others in late 1965 in order to clear the way for Mao's Cultural Revolution. During the Revolution, he has taken the lead in purging--or has acted with Madame Mao and others in purging--about half of the central military leadership and many regional and provincial leaders. He has protected the young Maoist revolutionaries harassing the PLA while rebuking and punishing the PLA for retaliating (spring 1967, summer 1967, and spring 1968). He has soaked the PLA in Mao's thought and has consistently told his military comrades that the criterion for judging them will be their loyalty to Mao and Mao's thought--and he has acted on that principle. He has repeatedly failed to induce Mao to give the PLA the authority commensurate with its responsibilities or to help his military subordinates to understand Mao's opaque "instructions", and he has conciliated the PLA only reluctantly and in periods of acute dependence on it.

Despite his obligations to and good relations with the Russians in the years 1938-1942, Lin immediately thereafter supported Mao against the Soviet-oriented Chinese leaders, and since 1959 has stood firm with Mao on the entire range of issues in dispute with Moscow. During the Cultural Revolution, Lin has spoken so offensively about the Russians--using Mao's harsh and derisive terms--that they appear to hate him almost as much as they do Mao. As in his handling of the PLA, he has joined a pullback only--as in recent stages of the border dispute--in periods of great danger.

Lin's View of Himself

Lin's own definition of his relationship with Mao is so extreme that it has sometimes been regarded as a hoax, a cynical exploitation of the old man's insatiable

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vanity. For more than 25 years Lin has been upholding Mao's "thought" and urging absolute faith in Mao, and in recent years he has praised Mao--in terms reminiscent of Stalin's sycophants--as always correct, the greatest of all Communists, the supreme genius, the source of all light, the answer to every problem. Lin has abjured any body of thought of his own, or even any identity of his own, apart from that of Mao. He has presented himself as entirely Mao's instrument, the perfect servant, recognizing the distance between the law-giver and himself, doing his best to understand and carrying out with all his might what he could understand, while being prepared --as Mao's servants above all must be prepared--to take the responsibility for any action which Mao might later define as a "mistake". In all of these respects, his record is much better than that of his predecessor, Liu Shao-chi.

There is probably a degree of rhetoric in Lin's statements of his feelings toward Mao, but the record does seem to support Lin's account of himself as awed, dazzled, and in bond entirely. He has proven his fidelity in the best possible way--that is, identifying his own interest completely with Mao's, he has repeatedly risked his own position for Mao's sake, and has accepted the danger of retaliation--from the PLA and the Russians--in the future. He has indeed been Mao's "best pupil." There seems very little chance that he will turn on Mao and refuse to carry out Mao's will to the best of his ability, or that he will try to hurry the old man into retirement or into the grave.

Mao's Confidence in Lin

The record also shows Mao to be responding to Lin's devotion by assigning Lin posts and tasks of increasing importance and trust. This has been true in the military field, in the political field, and in recent years across the entire range of a party leader's concern.

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Lin's role in the years 1928-1934 is not entirely clear, but there is no doubt that Mao chose Lin for a curcial military role in 1935 during the Long March. He gave Lin the command of a large part of the Chinese Communist forces in 1937, and gave him discretion in using them. In 1945, as soon as Lin was well enough to handle the job, Mao gave him command of the best forces and assigned him the most important military mission, the contest for the Northeast. This won, he gave Lin the most important role in taking the rest of China. In 1952, when Lin was disabled, Mao named him to the MAC, and in 1959, soon after Lin had returned to action, Mao named him to the two most important military posts, Minister of Defense and Chief of the MAC.

Mao showed high confidence in Lin as a political leader as early as 1936, in naming him to head the school which was to train all Chinese Communist military leaders. He demonstrated this confidence repeatedly in 1942 and 1943, when he used Lin--just back from the USSR--against the Soviet-oriented leaders in "rectification," named Lin to head the reorganized party school, sent Lin to Chungking to negotiate with the Nationalists, and named Lin as his successor as political officer and (again) president of the military academy. In 1949, when Mao made Lin a regional party first secretary as well as regional military commander, he was the only person so honored. Lin was taken into the politburo in 1955 even when he was sick and out of action. Upon his return to limited duty Lin was made a vice-chairman of the party and a member of the politburo standing committee. When Lin was named to head the MAC in 1959, this party organ for the control of the military establishment was subordinated only to Mao, not to the party apparatus.

Mao may have begun to think of Lin as his successor as early as 1962. At that time Mao began to transfer his own base of power from the party apparatus to Lin's PLA, and to make the political work methods of the PLA and then the PLA as a whole the models for Chinese society. For the next three years, Lin and the PLA were increasingly presented as the best examples for every individual and every organization. In 1965, Mao took Lin into his

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confidence in planning the Cultural Revolution and the great purge which was central to it, took Lin with him to his headquarters outside Peking, and gave Lin the leading role in the first stage of the purge in late 1965. He assigned Lin the main speech at the party conference of May 1966 which officially launched the Cultural Revolution, and at the party plenum of August 1966 he revealed Lin to be his choice as his successor, again assigning him the main speech. He had Lin speak for him at the rallies of August and September which launched the Red Guards, and again assigned to Lin the main speech at the October work conference which revealed Mao's further plans for the Cultural Revolution. While Mao then supplemented Lin with Madame Mao for the next stage of the purge of the PLA, from January 1967 Mao used the PLA as the main instrument of the Cultural Revolution, and he did not hold Lin responsible--as he held other military leaders--for "mistakes" in handling mass organizations or for occasional acts of defiance by military leaders. Nor did he hold Lin responsible--as he easily might have--for the offenses of his proteges Hsiao Hua (summer 1967) and Yang Cheng-wu (spring 1968). On the contrary, the October 1968 plenum proclaimed Lin's conduct in the Cultural Revolution as "entirely correct," and drafted a Constitution providing for him to succeed Mao without contest. At the Ninth Congress in April 1969, Lin was again assigned the main speech and was given several places in the politburo for military men in whom he apparently had confidence. Mao took Lin with him to a resort for the summer, and again on National Day in October assigned him the main speech.

Although Mao is unstable, he will probably not change his mind about Lin. Lin might need to improve his position--that is, install more of his own men--in certain central organs of the party in order to be secure against any attempt to prevent him from succeeding Mao, but it is doubtful that Mao's other lieutenants would defy the old man's will and block Lin's way. It is therefore likely that Lin will get his chance as the party's chairman.

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Lin's Saturation in Mao's Thought

With regard to Mao's "thought," the heart of the matter is a belief in something close to the perfectibility of the party cadre, although not the perfectibility of mankind. There is to be a new, completely political, hypermotivated, selfless party worker who will direct imperfect men in the building of a new Chinese society. This society will be egalitarian, austere, and in a state of continuous revolution. That is, the party and the society will continue to purify themselves through class struggle, through a series of Cultural Revolutions, creative disorders. This vision of the good society presumes a large, although perhaps diminishing, sector of society in labor camps and under other duress. The party is to direct and control "mass" action in which the people participate in the formulation of policies devised for the common good. The society is to be the model for all peoples, and--as a political hyperactive, economically prosperous, and militarily powerful modern state--an instrument for their liberation.

The new Chinese cadre is made possible by the availability of Mao's thought, embodied in Mao the perfect man, who accepts deification not for himself, but on behalf of his "thought." Mao's "thought," in practice, calls first for unremitting political indoctrination, mainly the instillation of moral incentives, producing the fanatical revolutionary will which works with all its might and fears "neither hardship nor death." This revolutionary will is to be produced in all cadres and in the masses so far as possible. The "thought" calls for mobilization of the masses on a colossal scale, as in the campaigns against counter-revolutionaries, the Leap Forward, the commune program, and most recently the Cultural Revolution.

The military doctrine of the emerging Maoist society is centered on "people's war," both as a defensive strategy and as an offensive strategy. The defense-in-depth concept holds that Chinese numerical superiority, high morale, and the dispersion of resources will permit China

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to survive a nuclear attack and to entice an invader to his doom. Chinese offensive doctrine does not envisage taking high risks by invading other countries but rather encourages "people's wars" of the Chinese type, in which Communist-led forces rely mainly on their own efforts and are assisted as practicable by Peking

Mao's thought does not call for incessant, insensate militancy, in which no allowance is made for the limitations of the human material and the refractoriness of the environment; it calls for an adjustment to reality as necessary. Mao has been able to retreat in time to preserve his own position and to avoid a popular revolt. But his bias is militant, calling for the utmost effort on a revolutionary line before any slackening is permitted: thus, in practice Mao's thought allows for a retreat when the real world compels a retreat, usually long after the time a non-Maoist would think a retreat advisable.

Mao's "thought" has entailed a style of leadership which is similar in some respects to Stalin's but is identifiably Mao's. Whether Mao's directives call for a revolutionary advance ("Bombard the headquarters") or for a period of retreat and consolidation ("We must have unity"), Mao's position is always the one correct position, the true Leftist center between the extremes of the Right and the Ultra-Left. Mao's directives are sometimes clear ("People's communes are good," or "Those who attack the PLA will be suppressed") but, when he is undecided about his policy, often vague (the PLA and mass organizations are to "cooperate", or the masses are to "take part" in party consolidation). The party cadre is always the man in the middle, between the infallible Mao and the childlike masses, held responsible for errors in understanding Mao's will or for incompetence in carrying it out. The failings of cadres are revealed by intensive and prolonged criticism; the unrepentant and incorrigible--willfully in error, like Liu Shao-chi--are purged, but most are redeemed by exhaustive self-criticism, repentance and reform. Every campaign, no matter how ruinous in some respects, is held to result in great gains and only minor losses, and

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prepares the ground for another campaign as soon as, in Mao's judgment, the people and the environment can stand it.

Lin Piao has been fully identified with Mao's thought--not only in his formal speeches, which he has admitted he does not write, but in his informal talks and spontaneous remarks, which best reflect his true beliefs. By the late 1940's he had accepted Mao's "thought" as a coherent body of doctrine, and in the years to come was to find it the only necessary doctrine. By 1959, he was on record as endorsing and defending Mao's radical domestic programs and the rationale for them, and Mao's application of his thought to the building of the military establishment and the PLA's role in Chinese life. By the end of 1960, he had associated himself firmly with Mao's strategic military concepts, and Mao's rejection of Soviet "revisionism." In the next few years he applied strenuously to the PLA Mao's methods of remaking men. In 1965 he spoke for the concept of "people's war" as both offensive and defensive doctrine in the most ambitious terms possible, and by early 1966 he was calling for an ideological revolution in China. In the course of the Cultural Revolution he has stated repeatedly his belief in Mao's vision of a new China, his faith in transforming men on Mao's lines (in particular, in spiritual over material incentive), his devotion to "struggle" as the principle of all progress, and his willingness to accept any costs to make Mao's vision actual.

Like Mao, Lin accepts the principle of making a strategic retreat when necessary, while hailing previous advances and planning another as soon as possible. By 1960 he was associated with a retreat in Mao's domestic campaigns, and was praising Mao's willingness to make it. Similarly, in the course of the Cultural Revolution he has joined Mao in pulling back from confrontations with the PLA as a whole in periods of great dependence on it. And he has been cautious in recent months on the Sino-Soviet border dispute. Nevertheless his predisposition, like Mao's, is militant, forcing the human material to the limit.

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Lin as a Leader

As a 1967 psychiatric assessment found, Lin gives an impression of rigidity. He is austere, even bleak. Unlike Mao, he does not smoke, drink, or overeat, and lives much like a common soldier. Like Mao, he speaks from dogmatic positions, and is self-righteous and punitive. While advocating persuasion, his tendency is to deliver lectures and give orders, sometimes more harshly than Mao himself. Like Mao, he can sometimes be influenced, but not until he is in trouble. As the psychiatric assessment concluded, he is seclusive, suspicious, and distrustful; he believes that everyone should be watched all the time.

Since Mao is always right, Lin is always right. While he has proclaimed himself prepared to accept responsibility for "mistakes" as later defined by Mao, Mao has not in fact blamed him for anything, and Lin has held others sharply responsible, even though they had been given impossible tasks or opaque directives. Like Mao, he believes in spiritual cleansing--in putting cadres through criticism and self-criticism again and again in an effort to redeem them. He himself has made self-criticisms, although not in recent years. While he has shown some sympathy from time to time for his military comrades, because of the problems they face, like Mao he believes in the removal, confinement, or (sometimes) execution of those who cannot be redeemed, and he has joined Mao in conducting such purges.

Despite his role as the successor, he has been a generally unsatisfactory source of guidance to his subordinates and to the people as a whole. While this failing is attributable in part to Mao's frequent failure to provide clear guidance, Lin too often simply offers Mao's "thought" as a bag to find the answer in--"Apply Mao's thought in a living way," or "Judge all cadres by their adherence to Mao's thought." Or he points in a given direction but does not tell his audience how to get there--"Support the Left." Or he is silent--thus putting all of the burden of interpretation on his subordinates while he sits back to render judgment on them.

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The evidence, in sum, is that Lin is what Mao believes him to be--a reliable "revolutionary successor" who will do his best to carry on along Mao's lines. The evidence is not absolutely conclusive, because Lin has never operated apart from Mao, but what evidence we have points that way. To conclude otherwise would be to judge that Lin for 35 years has been engaged in a complete deception.

This is not to say that Lin--without Mao--will be able to carry on for very long on Mao's lines. He is totally without Mao's charisma while possessing similar defects of character. He lacks control of certain key portions of the structure of power while he has already alienated some of the military leaders on whom he will depend. Thus he might soon be deposed or at least forced to modify, substantially, Mao's policies. But he will begin as a true Maoist radical.

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ANNEX

"In sailing the seas, depend upon the helmsman; in making revolution, depend on Mao's thought."

--attributed to Lin Piao

The Rise to Power, 1928-1959

A student and protege of Chou En-lai's in the mid-1920s, Lin Piao apparently took Mao Tse-tung as his man from the moment of meeting him in 1928. Commanding military units during the establishment and defense of the Kiangsi Soviet (1928-1934), Lin employed the guerrilla tactics for which Mao is given credit. Lin is said to have agreed with Mao in those years on the principle of party domination of the military and to have stood with Mao against other elements of the party and military leadership who questioned Mao's policies. Early in the Long March of 1934-35, Lin was among Mao's supporters in the showdown with other party leaders which established Mao as the dominant figure, and Lin led the troops which were victorious in the most important engagement of the Long March, the breakthrough to the Northwest.

Evidence of Mao's confidence in Lin's political reliability appeared as early as 1936, when Mao named Lin--together with himself--to head the military academy in Yen-an. Early in the Sino-Japanese war, Lin's outnumbered forces defeated a good Japanese division in the largest engagement the Communists fought during the war. Wounded then or in early 1938, Lin was separated from Mao for four years while he was under treatment in the USSR. Lin got on very well with the Russians, but, on returning to Yen-an in 1942, he supported Mao strongly in the party "rectification" campaign--a purge and re-indoctrination--aimed at party leaders who were closer to Moscow than Mao was. Mao's confidence in Lin in the

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early 1940s is evident in the assignments Mao gave him. Lin was an instructor in the "rectification" campaign; in 1942, with Mao, he headed the reorganized party school; in 1942-43, he was assigned, with Chou En-lai, to negotiate with the Chinese Nationalists in Chungking; in 1943 he was again made president, and replaced Mao as political officer, of the Yen-an military academy; and he was elected the sixth-ranking member of the central committee in 1945.

By 1945 Lin was sufficiently recovered from illness to take command of the best of the Chinese Communist forces for a drive into the Northeast. He again commanded brilliantly, and by 1948 his forces occupied all of the Northeast. Again he got on well with the Russians, but his loyalty was still to Mao. Mao's confidence in Lin was expressed again during the Communists' drive into South China in 1949, when Lin became the only regional military commander to be named concurrently the regional party chief. Praised by the official party history above all other military leaders, Lin would probably have been named Minister of Defense in 1949 if his health had permitted. By the end of 1951 he appeared to be totally incapacitated. Although he apparently did not return to full-time activity until 1957, he was named a vice-chairman of the party's Military Affairs Committee (MAC) in 1952, and named to the party politburo in 1955.

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By spring 1958, when he was named a vice-chairman of the party and a member of the politburo standing committee (the most important party organ), Lin stood higher in the central party leadership than did the then Minister of Defense and de facto chairman of the MAC, Peng Te-huai. By that time, capable of limited activity, Lin was probably working with Mao in asserting some of the doctrines and shaping some of the policies which were to prove offensive to Moscow. In Lin's field, this entailed a downgrading of Soviet military doctrine and practice and the imposition of Mao's concepts from guerrilla days as the central concepts of strategic doctrine. It also included assignment of major non-military tasks to the armed forces. In the summer of 1959 a group led by Peng Te-huai--which advocated more orthodox programs of military and economic

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development and compromise in the Sino-Soviet dispute-- precipitated a showdown. Lin stood firm with Mao. Peng was purged in September and Mao named Lin Minister of Defense and de facto chief of the MAC with the task of getting the military back into line. His new assignments made Lin the regime's dominant military man, and one of the top five or six leaders of the party.

The "Best Pupil," 1959-1965

On his appointment as Minister of Defense, Lin published his first major article. In it he made clear his identification with Mao, defending Mao's principles of army-building and army-party relations (especially party control and "politics in command"), and pledging the PLA's "unconditional" allegiance to Mao personally. As Lin was to prove in the Cultural Revolution, Lin's loyalty was to Mao personally, rather than to an abstract "party."

Early in 1960 Lin instructed the PLA to memorize the most important passages in Mao's works, "even though you do not understand them." (Lin was later, during the Cultural Revolution, to issue a similar order with respect to Mao's directives.) Lin at this time began to be described as Mao's "best pupil."

By autumn 1960 Lin was playing a major role in the campaign to defend Mao's abiding concepts and to relieve Mao of responsibility for the fiasco of the Great Leap Forward. One of Lin's contributions was a review, published in September 1960, of some of Mao's writings, in which Lin defended Mao against domestic and foreign "revisionists." Inter alia, Lin endorsed the "paper tiger" concept--that the West would be afraid to use its nuclear weapons and therefore could be aggressively opposed--and the concomitant article of faith that the Communists could attain power in many countries through "people's wars" of the Chinese type.

The strategy for preserving Mao's infallibility came through most clearly in Lin's military "rectification"

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campaign of 1960-61, in which he introduced a doctrine of the "four firsts" hailed as a "creative application" of Mao's thought. These "firsts" made political indoctrination the key to success, and made party cadres in the PLA fully responsible for transmitting Mao's policies to the "masses" and for interpreting the response. In other words, Mao's policies were always correct, and failure could come only from stupidity, obstruction, or sabotage. This was to prove the rationale for the great purge of the party in the Cultural Revolution.

During the retreat from the extremes of the Leap Forward and the commune program, Lin informed the troops correctly that Mao's doctrine and practice allowed for occasional retreats when forced by the real world to make them. He told them, indeed, to study Mao's way of holding hard to reality. And in 1961, Lin himself showed an ability to take sensible steps to enhance the regime's military-preparedness and to restore PLA morale--such measures as giving priority to military training over non-military activities, increasing army rations, and improving the lot of servicemen's families. Such adjustments to reality led some observers to think of Lin as a "pragmatic" leader.

He was, however, a dedicated Maoist. It was at that time (1961) that Lin compiled the selection of quotations from Mao's works that have since become famous as the Little Red Book.

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the "socialist education" campaign soon thereafter, Mao was applying to the Chinese society the extreme methods of political indoctrination perfected in the PLA under Lin since 1960. And in December 1963 Mao issued his explicit call to "learn from the PLA," directing all non-military organizations in China to emulate the organizational, operational and ideological training methods of the PLA. Lin was out of sight for most of the period from 1962 through 1964, but apparently contributed to the emulation campaign. By spring 1964 he was helping to establish military-type political departments in government organs, and was telling the PLA that it was hard but essential to understand Mao's thought.

In June 1964 Mao made known his concern with the problem of "revolutionary successors"

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In other words, he declared his intention to purge the party--but at a level then uncertain. He presumably felt able to do so because he now had a solid base of support in Lin's PLA. Lin remained out of sight, reportedly sick, but the build-up of Lin in the Chinese press increased.

It was apparent in early 1965 that party leaders had found renewed opposition in the PLA to the emphasis on "politics" and its expression in doctrine, organization, and training. Lin, apparently recovered, returned to the news in the spring of 1965, and his hand seemed visible in some of the measures taken (e.g., abolition of ranks) against "bourgeois" military thought. The task of publicly refuting this opposition was at first left to some of Lin's deputies in the MAC who were later purged as part of the opposition, but in a long article of September 1965 Lin came on strong as Mao's defender and exegete. He again stated his personal identification with Mao's principles of army-building (especially the primacy of "politics") and of Mao's concept of "people's war" (luring the enemy in deep) for the defense of China. Lin also endorsed again the concept of "people's war" as an offensive doctrine, asserting that the developed areas of the world would eventually be encircled and dominated by the under-developed areas, as his own forces

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had surrounded and captured the cities of Northeast China. Lin may not have believed everything attributed to him in this article, but he was willing to identify himself so completely with Mao that he would be doomed if Mao were to lose the coming showdown in the party. At about this time, Mao spoke of himself to visitors as a military man who took other military men--specifying Lin--as his lieutenants.

The Designated Successor, 1965-66

In autumn 1965, Lin was among the few party leaders informed of Mao's plans for an offensive against his opponents. Lin's PLA newspaper took the lead in November in describing an anti-Mao play--used as the symbol of all opposition to Mao--as a "poisonous weed," and Lin told the PLA that it must regard Mao's works as its "highest instructions" in everything. Lin went south with Mao to an East China sanctuary in late November, and he is now known to have taken the lead in December in summoning there the first group of leaders to be purged.

In January 1966 Lin again told the PLA that Mao's works were supreme directives and that "everything he says is the truth." In February Lin began what was to be an ambivalent and difficult relationship with Madame Mao as another watchdog over the PLA. He invited the militant Madame to prepare a rationale for a purge of the PLA. In the same month, [redacted] he moved troops into Peking to frustrate the plans of suspected conspirators. Throughout March and April, Lin wrote and spoke on the need for an ideological revolution; in May, Mao in a letter to Lin ordered the PLA to "play a very great role" in this revolution, and revealed his concept of the new Chinese man as an omniscient worker-peasant-soldier. Also in May Lin made the key speech at a party conference which officially launched the Cultural Revolution and confirmed that a purge of the party and of the PLA was underway. Describing Mao as the greatest of all Communists, the man who "always

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understands" and is always right, Lin again threatened Mao's opponents, many of whom he knew to be present.

In the early summer, PLA cadres were used to guide and incite extremist students conducting the "revolution" in the schools. After Liu Shao-chi and others had fallen into Mao's trap by attempting to suppress this Maoist initiative, a central committee plenum met in August and under duress approved Mao's plans for an official Cultural Revolution and Mao's choice of Lin Piao as "deputy supreme commander of the entire party." Again Lin made the main speech, showing himself to be identified absolutely with Mao, to think of himself entirely as Mao's instrument, and to be ready to take the blame for "mistakes" that were really Mao's. Lin called for all party cadres to be judged on the criteria of whether they were or were not avid students of Mao's thought, devoted to ideological-political work, and militant activists. He said again that there was much in Mao's lofty thought he could not understand, but that he would nevertheless carry out Mao's directives, asking for clarifying "instructions" on everything but recognizing that he would inevitably make "mistakes" for which he must accept the responsibility. This line soon appeared in simplified form as an exhortation to the PLA--to carry out Mao's policies "whether we understand them or not."

In the same week, Lin told PLA leaders that the PLA was to be judged by the same harsh standards applied to the party. In yet another speech, he associated himself emphatically with Mao's long-range vision of "transforming men's souls," and of developing productivity by this means rather than by providing material incentive. He said he recognized opposition to this approach, and made clear that he was also prepared to use force if necessary. On another occasion Lin defined political power as primarily the "power to suppress."

Lin spoke for Mao at the mid-August rally which unveiled the Red Guards as an instrument for attacking the party apparatus, and spoke again at the next two rallies. Lin was militant on all three occasions, telling the revolutionary young to use Mao's thought as their guide

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for discovering Mao's opponents, whom they were then to strike down. By mid-September, Lin was telling military audiences that Mao's works should constitute "99 percent" of Communist classics, and that Mao was the world's "supreme genius" and the greatest man known to history. Calling on military schools to purge themselves, he again presented Mao's thought as the only beacon needed for such an exercise. Events were soon to prove that such guidance was insufficient.

Purging and Relying on the PLA, 1966-67

In October 1966, Lin made further preparations for a large-scale purge of the PLA.

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At the same time, a special group was set up to conduct this purge, and Lin--again to please Mao--named or accepted Madame Mao as the dominant figure of this group. Lin at this time praised the accomplishments of the Cultural Revolution in intensifying Mao-study, exposing Mao's opponents, revolutionizing Chinese society on Mao's lines, and producing reliable "revolutionary successors."

Lin in late October again made the main speech to a top-level party meeting. Speaking authoritatively and without apology as Mao's first lieutenant, Lin again praised the Cultural Revolution and the role of violence in it, and outlined Mao's plans for continuing the revolution. Lin again stated strongly his identification with Mao's longer term objective of creating a new, selfless party cadre to build a new Chinese society.

In November, the militant Madame Mao began to question whether Lin's PLA was "loyal" to Mao, and Lin allowed her to take the public lead at this time in purging the PLA. She began by attacking Lin's senior deputy on the MAC, and Lin soon joined in. In the next few weeks Lin and the Madame purged several high-ranking officers of the central military leadership--including the chief of

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the PLA's special group for the conduct of the purge--and several of the top officers of the regional military commands. Most of these men had probably resisted the Revolution as charged, and Lin proved willing to sacrifice them even though some were old comrades.

In mid-January 1967 the PLA newspaper suggested strongly that the purge of the PLA still had a long way to go in order to make it "truly loyal" to Mao. Within a week, however, Mao's recognition of the inability of the Red Guards to replace the existing party apparatus made it necessary to send the PLA into action as an instrument of the Revolution and thus to postpone any further purge of it.

On 23 January the PLA was ordered to support the "genuine" leftists and was authorized to use force against force. In other words, the PLA was to install the young Maoists as the supervisors of new revolutionary organs of power (first called "communes") and to restore order. Within a few days, Mao and Lin directed the modulation of the Cultural Revolution the PLA itself, clearly to avoid further disruption in their essential power base.

Lin himself emphasized the task of supporting the Left, but he again, as with the Red Guards earlier, failed to provide clear guidance. In practice, the PLA moved quickly to restore order and to become a de facto governing apparatus in the name of the Left. In February, Peking called for a new type of governing apparatus: the formation of "revolutionary committees" composed of PLA officers, acceptable party cadres and representatives of mass organizations, which would act as provisional organs of power at all levels.

By March, it was evident to Mao and Lin that the PLA had not, in general, acted as a revolutionary force. Lin himself apparently went on an inspection tour in March, and concluded that the PLA was mishandling the young revolutionaries. In late March he again told military audiences that great disorder was necessary to bring down Mao's opponents and produce reliable "successors," and that authority was being withdrawn from the PLA; PLA

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units were to act only on orders from above. This was the first of several times in the Cultural Revolution that Lin was to rebuke and restrict the PLA for taking conservative positions.

Lin at this time first expressed displeasure with compilations of passages from his speeches on the ground that they falsely gave an impression that he had a body of thought apart from Mao's. He also admitted that his health was bad and that neurological damage restricted his activity. Peking no longer admits this.

During the spring of 1967, a period of greatly increased disorder following the restriction of the PLA, Lin sometimes showed some sympathy for the military men, but he continued to make clear that his first loyalty was to Mao. For example, he named to key positions some of his close military colleagues who had been denounced by radical Red Guard groups, and he defended others against Red Guard attacks, but he did not appoint or defend anyone in Mao's disfavor. Similarly, he criticized the excesses of mass organizations as well as unauthorized actions by some military region leaders, and in June he gave the PLA responsibility for putting an end to various Red Guard offenses; but if he attempted to induce Mao to give the PLA authority commensurate with this responsibility, he failed.

Lin and the PLA Crises, 1967-1968

Lin responded quickly and harshly, in summer 1967 and again in spring 1968, to two affronts to Mao by PLA leaders. In both periods, renewed violence by mass organizations and representations from PLA leaders caused Lin to moderate his threats to the PLA, but in both periods Lin made clear that he favored a hard, Maoist line in shaping up the military establishment and rebuilding the party.

The first affront came in mid-July 1967, following a decision to send delegations around China to settle

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local arguments. The Wuhan commander refused to accept instructions sent by Madame Mao and permitted certain mass organizations to beat and detain members of the delegation. The central leaders recalled and purged the offending officers and called for the purge of an additional bad "handful" in the PLA.

Lin was a part of this tough response. In a speech to regional military leaders assembled in Peking in early August, he reiterated his favor for creative "disorder," warned them against emulating the Wuhan commander, and called on all military leaders to admit and correct their mistakes. He told them that mass organizations would be classified not in terms of their attitude toward the PLA but solely on the basis of whether they supported Mao or not. He emphasized that the military were to get instructions from central party leaders, not act on their own. On the same day, Lin acted on Madame Mao's call to "arm the leftists"--i.e., to give arms to selected mass organizations which might use them against the PLA.

In supplementary gestures of loyalty to Mao at that time, Lin ended press references to the "thought of Lin Piao," purged one of his own longtime proteges (Hsiao Hua) who headed the General Political Department, and made Mao's daughter the acting editor of the PLA newspaper.

As mass violence rapidly increased, Mao and Lin were forced to retreat. That is, they were forced to recognize again their dependence on the PLA, and they took measures calculated to please military leaders. They dropped Madame Mao--the worst friend of the PLA--from the special group conducting the "revolution" in the PLA. They formed another group to assist military units in handling mass organizations, and named a non-radical to head it. They used Madame Mao to reverse and repudiate the line of late July and early August which had threatened the PLA with another large-scale purge. They gave the PLA a new directive authorizing it to use force against some kinds of offenses. And they purged some second-level civilian figures who had been heavily involved with radical mass organizations which had harassed the PLA.

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By November, however, Mao had begun to worry again --as in spring 1967--about the fate of his young revolutionaries, and Madame Mao made two speeches which were taken, not unreasonably, as justifying a resumption of violence and of attacks on the PLA. Lin did not directly incite the young militants, but during the winter he reminded the PLA that he endorsed Mao's advocacy of "struggle" in all aspects of life and that he would never let "personal friendships" stand in the way of the revolution. He also told three new political security organs set up by the MAC that their tasks were to saturate the PLA with Mao's thought and to investigate the PLA's leaders once again, as the central party leaders did not know whom they could trust. In this connection, Lin told another audience that they could trust nobody--that all cadres should be placed under constant observation.

The second affront to Mao arising from the PLA came in March 1968. In a case which is still puzzling, Yang Cheng-wu, Lin's chief-of-staff and the MAC-level supervisor of all political security organs in the PLA, was suddenly purged as a "rightist". The immediate cause of his fall was allegedly his effort to arrest some unknown persons whom Madame Mao put under her protection. Lin was again quick to throw his old comrades and proteges to the wolves when they had come into Mao's disfavor. Despite the overwhelming record of his fidelity to Mao and of Mao's confidence in him, Lin may have been worried about his own position. In the late March meeting which surfaced the affair, Lin dissociated himself from Yang and was obsequiously deferential to Madame Mao. Yang was replaced by another longtime protege of Lin's who, although representative of conservative military men, was regarded by both Mao and Lin as loyal.

Following the purge of Yang and two other senior officers charged as confederates, Lin was prominent in the new offensive against the "rightists". With Madame Mao and others, he sharply criticized certain military leaders for conservative attitudes toward mass organizations. Lin even returned to the theme--discredited since the previous September--of the need for a further purge of the PLA.

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Again, however, as in January 1967 and spring 1967, the young revolutionaries of mass organizations went too far. By July, violence was so widespread, and the young were so scornful of directives, that Mao and Lin together--possibly pressed by PLA leaders--cracked down hard. Lin relayed the order to PLA commanders which permitted them to suppress and dismantle the most violent and disruptive of the mass organizations. Lin did not suffer, however, for having acted in general as a protector of mass organizations. That had been Mao's position too.

With the last of the provincial "revolutionary committees" formed rapidly, in orderly conditions, in August and September, Lin spoke for Mao on National Day (1 October). He defined the main task of the next stage as that of carrying out "struggle-criticism-transformation" throughout China. Most important were the consolidation of the "revolutionary committees," the continuing purge of the lower levels of the party, and the rebuilding of the party in accordance with Mao's call to "take in new blood."

Later in October, a central committee plenum proclaimed that Mao's various guidelines and Lin's exegeses in the course of the Cultural Revolution had been "entirely correct." Lin--again out-Maoing Mao--described the losses suffered in the Revolution as "very, very trifling, and the gains as "very, very great." The plenum drafted a new party constitution which provided for Lin to become Mao's successor without an election, thus testifying both to Mao's continuing favor for Lin and to his lack of confidence that Lin could win the position through election.

The Ninth Congress and After, 1969

In the early months of 1969, prior to the Ninth Party Congress, it became apparent that the Maoists in Peking were dissatisfied with the operations of the "revolutionary committees" throughout China. The PLA commanders and political officers who dominated most of

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these committees were being excessively coercive toward the mass organizations and insufficiently attentive to the rehabilitated party cadres. In other words, the military were mishandling both of the other components of the revolutionary committees, and the whole process of rebuilding the party was going badly.

The Ninth Congress in April was billed as a congress for "unity and victory." Mao opened the session with a speech on the need for "unity." Lin, as the designated successor, made the main report, expressing confidence that the great majority could be unified against a handful of enemies. As Lin saw it, however, the main practical problem was to ensure that the re-constructed party leadership at all levels was in the hands of true Maoists. It is uncertain whether Lin realized that his statement of the problem implied a renewed emphasis on the role of revolutionary mass organizations at the expense of the PLA. The published report did not indicate that he did. In fact, the report as a whole was defensive, vague, and unhelpful, seemingly a poor show for the successor.

The new central committee that emerged from the Congress was large and fairly representative of the new structure of power. It named Mao and Lin as its only officers and selected a new politburo. The 21 full (voting) members of the new politburo seemed to fall into three groups: "Mao's" group of eight (including Lin as the only military figure), all of them people who had been closely associated throughout the Cultural Revolution and identified with its excesses; a "military" group of six active military leaders, who could also be regarded as "Lin's" group because all six had long been given special signs of Lin's favor; and an "unaligned" group of seven government leaders and inactive elders around Chou En-lai. Although Mao's group and Lin's military group dominated the politburo, there was a balance in the politburo in terms of predisposition to radical policies versus predisposition to conservative ones, with some of Lin's proteges among the conservatives. The Maoist radicals had only a narrow edge if any. The radicals did much better in the politburo standing committee, charged with directing the party's daily work.

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It consists of four Maoist radicals (including Mao and Lin) and one relative moderate (Chou).

There was room for improvement in Lin's position with respect to central party organs. The politburo as a whole was hardly an embodiment of "unity"; apart from differences in temperament between the civilian radicals and the military men, organizations dominated by the civilians had often been in actual conflict with organizations dominated by the military, and there was bad feeling between them. The politburo standing committee was dominated by radicals like Lin but Lin himself was the only Lin-man on it, and it was the standing committee that was to set up the rest of the central party apparatus, including the political security organs. It was uncertain whether Lin could shape as he wished the party apparatus which he was to inherit.

After the Ninth Congress,

Lin began to play a role in implementing a policy stated by Mao to the first plenum of the new central committee. In this late April speech, Mao in effect subverted the cause of "unity" by once again upgrading the role of revolutionary mass organizations, despite all the trouble they had got him into. Mao apparently asserted that conflicts among mass organizations and among the leaders of revolutionary committees could be resolved by more political indoctrination, that the PLA component dominating most of the revolutionary committees should not use coercion against the civilian components, and that more representatives of mass organizations should be taken into the committees and into their party core groups.

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While Mao and Lin were off together at a resort in summer 1969, re-emphasis on the role of the masses led again to an increase in factional violence and to the disruption of the revolutionary committees and the process of party-rebuilding. In August and September, Peking's concern about the possibility of a Soviet attack apparently led to a decision to authorize the PLA to use the necessary force to restore public order. However, the party press has since made clear that Mao and Lin remain determined to upgrade the role of the revolutionary masses

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in the revolutionary committees and their party core groups, despite the certainty of further disruption. In Lin's October 1 National Day pronouncement, he again called for carrying the Cultural Revolution through to the end, and made clear that he remained committed to the full range of Mao's objectives.